
380.80**Training Breastfeeding Peer Counselors****Initial Training**

Introduction	Breastfeeding peer counselors must receive approved training before assuming duties independently.
Curriculum	The training curriculum for WIC breastfeeding peer counselors is “ <i>Loving Support</i> © Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together, For Training WIC Peer Counselors, 2011” The curriculum includes many opportunities for discussion and interaction between the peer counselors. The activities are critical components of the training.
State agency responsibilities	<p>The state WIC agency’s responsibilities in training include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training the local agency breastfeeding peer counselor coordinator,• Training of other agency staff along with the peer counselor coordinator is recommended but not required,• Providing copies of the training curriculum,• Providing training props and equipment, and• Provide breastfeeding resources (videos, DVDs, books, brochures).
Local agency responsibilities	<p>The local WIC agency’s responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Making local arrangements for all training events (including site logistics, etc),• Training the peer counselors using “<i>Loving Support</i>© Through Peer Counseling: A Journey Together, For Training WIC Peer Counselors, 2011”• Training on use of the WIC electronic data system, and• Using the “peer counselor skills checklist” throughout training to assure that peer counselors have demonstrated understanding of all curriculum modules.

Note: The local agency Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Coordinator will develop the training schedule and plan in consultation with the state agency Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program Manager. The local agency may choose to partner with the state agency to provide training to peer counselors.

Continued on next page

Training Breastfeeding Peer Counselors, Continued

Sample training agenda

A sample training agenda can be found on page 3 of this policy.

Recognizing new counselors

Peer counselor recognition and a “graduation” ceremony are important parts of the training because it builds pride and offers a chance to interface with WIC staff and referral sources.

Suggestions of those to include:

- Family and friends
- Agency staff
- Media
- Community partners

Presentation of graduation certificates is highly recommended.

On-going training

The local agency is responsible for scheduling and providing periodic continuing education opportunities for breastfeeding peer counselors. It is important that training be provided to update and expand knowledge in the areas of breastfeeding and human lactation and basic breastfeeding skills. Examples of continuing education and training may include:

- Guest speakers at peer counselor meetings,
 - Breastfeeding topics presented at regular WIC staff meetings,
 - Breastfeeding coalition meetings related specifically to peer counseling activities,
 - Approved independent study, and
 - Other breastfeeding programs.
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Sample Training Agenda for New Peer Counselors

Day One

1 hour	Strategies for Training Peer Counselors
1 hour	Module 1: Becoming a Peer Counselor
1 hour	Module 2: Helping Moms Say Yes to Breastfeeding
1 hour	Module 3: Helping Moms Overcome Common Barriers

Day Two

3 hours	Module 4: How to Talk to Moms about Breastfeeding
1 hour	Module 5: Ways to Reach New Moms

Day Three

1.5 hours	Module 6: Encourage Exclusive Breastfeeding
1.5 hours	Module 7: Supporting New Breastfeeding Moms
1.5 hours	Module 8: Helping Moms when Things Don't Go As Planned

Day Four

1.5 hours	Module 9: Talking with Pregnant Women About Breastfeeding
1.5 hours	Module 10: Talking with Mothers in the First Month about Breastfeeding
1 hour	Module 11: Talking with Mothers as Baby Grows about Breastfeeding
1.5 hours	Module 12: Talking with Mothers about Breastfeeding when Mother and Baby are Separated
1 hour	Providing Peer Counselor Services in Other Settings (Optional Module)

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